

THIRD TO MARS: RATIONALE FOR THE CREATIVE PROJECT

A CREATIVE PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

BY

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Part 1: Motivations

There are several questions to be answered when discussing a creative project for a Master's degree. The first question in regards to this particular project is the motivation behind making the project. The motivations for doing the creative project were the same motivations behind coming back to Ball State University to earn a Master's degree in Digital Storytelling. These motivations were the need for more practical experience, more opportunities to work with resources, the prospect of collaboration, and the overall chance to tell a story.

In essence the Digital Storytelling program became a film school. This is why producing a creative project was chosen over writing a thesis paper. The intention behind seeking a Master's Degree was not to work on a research method, but to have a deliberate and concrete hands-on learning experience. This would allow for growth professionally and to build a bridge between undergraduate studies and academic life in general to larger goals in the professional sector. The creative project allowed for an opportunity to experience not only success, but also failure in a controlled manner. The Digital Storytelling program provided a proving ground and a place to coherently create ideas. Thus *Third to Mars* was the perfect project for a first full effort at filmmaking.

Another motivation behind *Third to Mars* was the optimal equipment the Department of Telecommunications had to offer. This equipment included the high definition camera, the high definition editing suite, and an outstanding audio editing suite. Having access to this equipment was a huge selling point in terms of the Digital Storytelling program in the first place. Therefore, these state of the art tools were a great benefit to the creative process and were main motivations behind producing a short film over a thesis written document.

The opportunity to collaborate was another motivating factor behind creating *Third to Mars*. Working alone was a consistent reality during the undergraduate phase of education. This reality was due to full time employment, the inability to participate in extra-curricular activities, and the immature resistance to sharing ideas. These factors hindered the undergraduate experience. A Master's Degree was sought to remedy these negative experiences.

Due to the scale of the creative project, *Third to Mars* required a cast of 18 and a crew of 28. The size of the project was much larger than anything personally attempted before, in undergraduate studies or elsewhere. This was done on purpose. From the onset of the idea for *Third to Mars*, the plan was to work with a large crew, a large cast, a big budget, a 10-day duration of shooting, a tough schedule, technical effects, and set building. These were all things that couldn't be done alone. This approach would eliminate comfort zones, force professional weak spots up to the surface, and challenge any other hindrances that were preventing the attainment of directing goals.

Specifically the story called for several actors and thus needed a complement of crew to meet the demands of production on a daily basis. Correspondingly, the collaborative experience offered a chance to work with others, deal with time management, and face shortcomings as a writer, editor, and director. The challenge of collaboration was too strong to pass up.

The final motivation behind selecting a creative project over a thesis paper was the opportunity to tell the story of *Third to Mars*. The script behind the film is part of a feature length script. The portion of script repurposed for the creative project is the beginning of the film and is designed to introduce the characters, the setting, and to end with a cliffhanger. The cliffhanger aspect is in place to interest audiences and more importantly financiers. *Third to Mars* will be used to pitch the feature length script to possible producers. Indeed the intention is

to have producers watch *Third to Mars* and gain an understanding of personal style, storytelling aesthetics, and what can be done with limited resources.

Part 2: Creations

The approach of this creative project was a short narrative film. As with any film the process of creation is separated into three phases. These phases included preliminary production, production, and post-production.

Preliminary production began in September 2008. Pre-production lays the groundwork for the project. The first aspect of this phase was the structuring of cast and crew. In putting together the groups of people who would assist in bringing *Third to Mars* to life, undergraduate students and graduate students from the colleges of Communication, Information, and Media, the Architecture and Planning, and Theatre and Dance were brought on board. Therefore the creative project was different from undergraduate short films and rather similar to the Cinema Entertainment Consortium, which brings several colleges together in a collaborative effort. *Third to Mars* bridged the programs without the aid of an intermediary institution and stands apart from undergraduate projects as well as previous graduate level creative projects.

Third to Mars also required the construction of a model spaceship. A model maker was contacted early on in the pre-production phase. Designs of the ship were drawn up, supplies were purchased from a local hobby store, and the model maker went to work building a spaceship that was supposed to look fantastical and futuristic at the same time. The end result was a one and a half foot model that consisted of pieces from a model PT boat, metal rods, wood planks, paint, and glue.

Following the building of the model spaceship and the acquisition of cast and crew, several other key activities occurred during the pre-production phase of *Third to Mars*. With respect to the undergraduate and graduate students, when their help was specifically solicited, credit will be given. Other important components of the pre-production process included the drafting of the screenplay, the development of the production book, and the building of the set.

As mentioned earlier, the screenplay for the thesis film was repurposed from a feature length script and redrafted several times to make sense as a five-minute piece. Several characters were omitted, the plot was pushed forward, and the number of locations was cut down. The script was converted from a story script to a workable shooting script. This process took several weeks and in actuality was still taking place throughout the production of the *Third to Mars*.

Another step in the preliminary production phase of *Third to Mars* was the creation of a production book. A production book is designed to contain all of the important documents of a film. The production book included a timetable, shooting schedule, crew listing, property and location lists, and storyboards which are all included in the appendix of this paper.

The timetable schedule laid out the game plan for the entire filmmaking process. Also, the timetable offered a contingency plan in case a problem arose during production. For instance, if the Sony F-900 high definition camera malfunctioned, the Sony HDV camera had been secured as a back-up camera. This contingency plan ensured the practical completion of the creative project.

The shooting schedule detailed the specifics for each day of production. This plan made it possible to forecast a final day of shooting and timeframe for the post production phase. For instance, on Saturday October 12th all of scenes 17 and 19 were planned to be shot. The shooting schedule was set up with the more complex scenes first and the smaller scenes last. This set up

got the harder scenes out of the way early in the process. This schedule detail played an important role in the success of *Third to Mars*.

Other components of the production book were the cast, crew, prop, and location lists. All of the listings made the production phase run smoother. The cast and crew lists were useful in managing staff time schedules. Prop lists helped keep track of the materials. The location list informed the cast and crew of where to report each day. These assets of the production book were very important during production.

The final piece of the production book was the storyboards. Created by a storyboard artist under the director's supervision, the storyboards visually detailed every major shot in the film. The storyboards were a crucial asset in the production book and were cited during every day of production.

The creation of these assets was time consuming, but very necessary and crucial to the success of the project. The entire production book was utilized during the production phase. Without the production book *Third to Mars* would have lacked structure and an effective plan for completion.

Another central part of preliminary production was the building of the set. A significant amount of *Third to Mars* takes place on the Spaceship Albatross and a backdrop needed to be built to successfully convey the existence of the ship. A crew of designers from the College of Architecture and Planning was brought on board to draw up blue prints. Set design took several weeks and was completed in time for building.

Undergraduate students from the College of Theatre and Dance assisted in building the set. Supplies were purchased out of pocket from a local lumber yard. To meet design specifications, facilities and equipment in the University Theatre were used to cut lumber and

shape support beams. From there the set pieces were transferred to Studio D in the Ball Communications Building and screwed together to complete the eight foot tall by twelve foot wide set wall. Without the help of the undergraduate students from both colleges, the construction of the set would not have been possible. In fact, every aspect of pre-production in *Third to Mars* was important in laying the groundwork for the rest of the process.

Upon the completion of pre-production, the production phase of *Third to Mars* began with shooting the film. The approach to actually filming the project was intended to mirror a professional set. This ambition was reinforced by the use of the high definition camera, the coordination of the high number of people present on set, and the necessity to maintain the professional pace and schedule that the production book required.

Principal photography for *Third to Mars* began on October 8th, 2008. The film shot for a total of ten days. The Sony F-900 series high definition camera was used to film *Third to Mars*. High definition is the highest quality video currently available and was selected as the format for this project due to the professional look of the finished product. To ensure the successful usage of the HD camera, a director of photography and camera operator experienced with the camera were enlisted on the production crew.

Another professional aspect of the production phase of *Third to Mars* was the coordination of the cast, crew, and other people on the set. Students from the Department of Telecommunications and the Theatre Department worked on the project in front of the camera and behind the scenes. Of the three phases of the film, shooting took the most collaboration. The crew included the aforementioned director of photography and camera operator as well as a gaffer, a boom microphone operator, and several production assistants just to name a few of the roles. These fellow filmmakers were undergraduate and graduate students who worked for

experience, not payment. The task of coordinating them on a daily basis was difficult, but throughout the process was a primary focus.

The final professional component of production was the reliance on the production book. As mentioned before, the production book was designed as a guide for production of the film. All of the lists, plans and schedules needed to be followed exclusively. This proved to be difficult. For instance, on the third day of shooting there were problems with several crew members not being able to work the entire scheduled time. Instead of quitting, the rest of the crew worked that much harder to complete the required material. This meant there was less time for multiple takes for the actors and a need for more focus from those who could stay the entire time. At the end of the day, the specific scenes had been filmed and the project was on time. In this way, *Third to Mars* maintained the qualities of a professional set.

The production phase of the creative project ended on October 29th. Of the three phases of *Third to Mars*, the actual production took the least amount of time. This is similar to professional sets. For instance, major motion pictures are sometimes in pre-production for years. If pre-produced correctly, the actual shooting of the film should not take very long. As with the other pre-production, production of the creative project greatly benefited from the outstanding help from undergraduate and graduate students.

Post production was the final phase of *Third to Mars* and began in November 2008. Post production is where the film is assembled and in the case of *Third to Mars* where the film was made completely coherent. The successful post production phase was due to a talented crew, state of the art tools, and a dedication to the story.

The post-production crew consisted of several Telecommunications undergraduate and graduate students. Much like the student based crew from the other two phases of the creative

project the students working in this phase had a great deal of experience using quality post software. The crew met in November for several meetings to implement a game plan.

Following the initial meetings, the visual effects crew went to work. During the months of December and January they created text, background extensions, and graphics for the film.

In terms of audio post production, the boom operator also served as the audio mixer. Several tasks were executed during the audio post work including the development of sound effects, the recording of narration, and the acquiring of automated dialogue replacement. Following these steps, these elements were mixed down with the music.

Something unique about *Third to Mars* is the completely original music used throughout. A Ball State alumnus volunteered to produce the score free of charge. The musician wrote the music, performed and recorded the music on keyboards, and then delivered the music electronically via an FTP site. The musician owns the rights to the score. The orchestration really makes the film special and puts it into a different category than most student films.

Another aspect of the post production was the software used on both the audio and visual sides of the process. Digidesign's ProTools program served as the primary software used in mastering the audio. The short film was edited on Apple's Final Cut Pro. The visual effects were built in Adobe's After Effects and Apple's Motion programs. These programs really assisted in making the story of *Third to Mars* a reality.

The final point in the success of the creative project's post production was the dedication to the story. As mentioned earlier, the script for the film had been redrafted several times to improve the overall story. For *Third to Mars* the story was flushed out in the editing process. While no scenes were totally eliminated from the script to the finished film, some shots were cut down. For instance, during the last sequence the main mission controller on Earth is

communicating with the man in space. The script originally called for more dialogue between the two characters and during the post production phase the scene needed to be cut down due to the pace of the story. This tightening up of the story happened several times while editing. In this way, post production not only fine tuned the film, but also stayed true to the essence of the story.

The story of *Third to Mars* is about the effect of advertising on space travel. To achieve this theme, the narrative film approach was selected over other filmic structures. This choice was made due to the freedom and ability to create a fictional story. Other structures, for instance the documentary format, would have been too limiting by design, because the goal of *Third to Mars* was to suggest a future world where advertising drives space flight. In that regard the goal of the creative project would not have been attained in documentary style. Documentary style tends to be interview based, unless the key characters are no longer living in which case still photographs and voiceover are utilized. *Third to Mars* required the expression of ideas, imagination, and was always intended to be satirical and fictional. For that reason, the narrative film was the only choice.

Part 3: Conclusions

The creation of *Third to Mars* truly was the result of the initial motivations behind selecting a creative project over a thesis. While not every aspect of the filmmaking process was executed perfectly, the fact that the film was made at all was a huge achievement. One of the primary goals of this creative project was to make a film unlike anything else attempted before. For instance, that is why the scale of the project was so important. Having success in making

this film, proved that lessons had been learned on several fronts and more lessons were still to be learned.

Other realizations gleaned from *Third to Mars* were the realities behind making a film. One of these realities was the difference between the finished product and the script. *Third to Mars* has a running time of 5 minutes and 50 seconds. In contrast, the final draft of the script came in at 8 pages. Typically a page of script is the equivalent of one minute of film. Obviously in the case of the creative project this was not true. The reason behind this discrepancy was the particulars of the script and editing process.

Dialogue has a tendency to lengthen the page count and in the case of this project, there was not a lot of dialogue. Instead, narration carried the story between scenes and therefore shortened the amount of time a scene played out. Also when describing a scene the descriptive paragraph may take up a fourth of a page and when read out loud may take several seconds, but when interpreted on screen may take half that time. For instance, the opening scene states

FADE IN.

INT. ALBATROSS SPACESHIP-OFFICE- NIGHT

A computer monitor sits on a desk. A small web cam rests on top of it. Papers, gadgets, a shirt wrapped in plastic, and a framed photo of two men smiling, are all scattered on the desktop around the monitor.

A young nerdy looking man, CONRAD, walks in from the left of the frame and absent-mindedly clicks on the TV monitor. He continues walking off to the right of the frame, rubbing his neck as though tired.

Reading this passage out loud takes approximately 10 seconds. However, in watching the film this information takes less than three seconds to play out. This sort of differential occurred throughout the post-production of the film. Though the discrepancy is interesting to note, it did not affect the story at all. In fact, the more compact the film was the more concise the

storytelling proved to be.

Editing played large part in the difference between the script and finished film as well. *Third to Mars* is a better film, due to just the tightening up of scenes. The film is a comedy and one of the most important tools in comedic film is editing. It is key to time the cuts between scenes to allow audiences the chance to react to the humorous content. In comedic film timing is everything. In this same regard, lingering on a shot or scene too long can be detrimental to the comedic timing and the pace of the film.

One of the conclusions of *Third to Mars* is that the timing of certain comedic elements is spot on while others could still use work. For instance, the scene in which the narrator talks about the first man to Mars over a still image could use some fine-tuning. The image is on screen for too long and the humor and gimmick of the scene wears off too soon. This is a fault of transitioning the story from script to film and not tightening up the scene as necessary. In the future, considerations will be made toward making the effort in this area for the sake of the story. The final main conclusion is determining the results of the project. In essence, does *Third to Mars* work? Is the creative project worthy of earning a Master's Degree? Does an audience laugh at the satire in the film? The answers to all of these questions are yes.

No project is perfect. There are several concepts in *Third to Mars* that could be flushed out. There are production values throughout the film that could be improved upon. Due to the film being satirical in nature, some of the comedic elements may not work for all audiences. However, for what it is worth by watching *Third to Mars* it is not difficult to glean what the humorous intentions of the project.

Another limitation of the project is the lack of budget. The entire film was paid for out of pocket. In most circumstances a small budget is fine on a short film. Unfortunately, due to the

ambitious narrative of the project the limited budget can be seen in several aspects of the film. For instance, there is an “Aerospace” sign that keeps popping up in the film. If a viewer looks closely they will be able to see that the sign is very cheaply put together. With a larger budget these mishaps would not have had the same impact on the finished film.

There are several significant points in *Third to Mars* in terms of the film profession. The primary significance is the fact that a high quality, short film was made. This may seem elementary, but the success of *Third to Mars* is unique only because the work ethic equaled the ambition. It may seem like anyone can make a short film and certainly with the influx of digital cameras and the prevalence of online video sharing websites like Youtube.com it is understandable that this conclusion could be made.

However, films of quality are hard to come by. It is easier to make a film with no plan, no shooting schedule, and no crew than it is to set out to make a challenging project. This is what makes *Third to Mars* unique to the profession. The film raises the bar of the Master’s level project in the scope of the film, the attempt at combining practical and computer visual effects, and the results the process had on all those involved.

Third to Mars will hopefully set the stage for future Digital Storytelling students to collaborate with others, use the outstanding available equipment, and challenge themselves. Furthermore, this project shows that narrative stories can be told on a limited budget both in the academic and public sectors. This is one of the most important conclusions gleamed from the success of the creative project.

In conclusion, a short film really is the sum of its parts. The first component is the concept that lays the groundwork. Then comes the script that is drafted and redrafted for clarity, time constraints, and other practicalities. The next component of a short film is bringing

together the right people to be a part of the filmmaking process all the while staying in the boundaries of the subject matter. The last part is completing the film. Without all of these components, the vision of this creative project would not have come to life. The most important aspect was managing these components. In the managing of the story, the equipment, and the staff, the most significant skills were learned. It is the learned skills of directing and the quality of the finished product that make truly make *Third to Mars* a Master's level creative project.

Appendix A

THIRD TO MARS
THESIS SHORT FILM

Production Book

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Section I: Description of Film

Title: Third to Mars

Genre: Short Narrative- Comedy

Running time: 8 minutes

Log line: 40 years from now, trips to Mars are old news and those attempting to make it there travel aboard ships with solar sails and company logos. A comedic social commentary about the world of today, set in the world of tomorrow.

Synopsis: Conrad is an Aeronaut, not an astronaut. Aeronauts are employees of Aerospace International, a private company reminiscent of Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic that uses corporate sponsorships to fund their space travels. Conrad is on his way to Mars on an 8-month trek. While he may be alone, he is quite busy. Everyday he is ON AIR endorsing products and smiling for his investors back home. Conrad is a dedicated Aeronaut, even if people on Earth are couldn't care less about Mars anymore... been there, done that.

Script Summary

The script for the thesis film deals with the back-story behind Aerospace International and Conrad's place in the grand scheme of things. The script opens on a stale looking office. A computer monitor, web cam, and paperweights cover the desk. Suddenly the monitor turns on and we are presented with a 1950's style commercial called the "History of Aerospace". An announcer narrates the story of the company over top visuals. We are introduced to the first man to Mars, LLEWELLYN. We also learn about the tragedy of his death on his return trip and the subsequent global backlash. Next, we meet the hero of Aerospace who brings glory back to the program by offering to go back and finish the job.

Inter spliced with the commercial, we see Conrad, the 3rd man to Mars, getting ready for his own TV spot. He brushes his teeth, puts on a tee shirt, and preps for the commercial. Back on Earth, we meet ED, the flight controller of Conrad's mission who is balding for many reasons, one being the sarcastic jerk he's trying to keep alive up in space.

The thesis film concludes with Conrad smiling and holding up a beverage for all of Earth to see. Whether he wants to be or not, the ad man/ Astronaut is ready for his close up.

THESIS FILM
"THIRD TO MARS"

WRITTEN BY
JAKE WILLIAMS
&
AUDREY M. BROWN

4th DRAFT
October 13, 2008

FADE IN.

INT. ALBATROSS SPACESHIP-OFFICE- NIGHT

A computer monitor sits on a desk. A small web cam rests on top of it. Papers, gadgets, a shirt wrapped in plastic, and a framed photo of two men smiling, are all scattered on the desktop around the monitor.

A young nerdy looking man, CONRAD, walks in from the left of the frame and absent-mindedly clicks on the TV monitor. He continues walking off to the right of the frame, rubbing his neck as though tired.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And now the HISTORY of AEROSPACE!!!

The text "HISTORY OF AEROSPACE" spreads across the screen.

A still image of the moon is on the screen.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Following the colonization of the moon, the world's largest and most successful space exploration and travel firm, Aerospace International, looked for a bigger, grander operation. Mars!

A still image of Mars replaces the moon. Under it MARS is written in the same fashion as the History of Aerospace text.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE-DAY

LLEWELLYN DICKS, a large African American man in his thirties, wears a shirt with the Aerospace logo emblazoned across the front. He walks up to a podium. Behind the podium is ED, the lead Aerospace Flight Controller, who is a balding man in his forties. Ed wears a black tie and white dress shirt.

They are in front of a large black curtain. Ed stands behind a podium with the "Aerospace International" seal on it.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Llewellyn Dicks, a talented young aeronaut, was selected to be the first man to make the journey and was given a heroes send off.

Llewellyn and Ed shake hands and smile for the paparazzi.

EXT. MARS-NIGHT

A still photograph fades up from Llewellyn and Ed shaking hands. It shows Llewellyn, in a space helmet and spacesuit, standing proud on the red soil. He holds an Aerospace flag.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And so, four months later Llewellyn Dicks stepped on the surface of Mars and took the place of Neil Armstrong as the most accomplished space traveler in the history of mankind.

INT. NEWS ROOM-DAY

A WOMAN NEWSCASTER is on the screen with Llewellyn in the super beside her. Above the super reads "FIRST STILL IMAGES FROM LLELWELYN'S SHIP CAMERA".

NEWSCASTER

Aerospace International has released to the media the first received transmission from Llewellyn Dicks' space ship camera. They are proud to show his first steps on Mars. This message brought to you by Pretty Kitty Kitty Litter.

The text on the crawl at the bottom of the screen reads "Aerospace International becomes first company to send a man to Mars. This message brought to you by Pretty Kitty Kitty Litter."

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Due to the unprecedented nature of the trip to Mars, television viewership was at an all time high, as the curious public waited for regular updates on the mission. Advertisers scrambled to take advantage of this new captive audience.

INT. ALBATROSS

Conrad sits down in front of the monitor and watches this segment of the broadcast laughing a little to himself, shaking his head.

CONRAD

(Sarcastically, imitating the announcer's voice)
Buying stuff became the wave of the future...

INT. SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

SIX SCIENTISTS, five men and two women, sit around a table. They are all dressed in white lab coats. In front of each one of them is a small flag from their country of origin.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The world's top scientists, who were hired by Aerospace to build the ship capable of reaching Mars, rejoiced in the success of the mission.

All of the scientists are smiling.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And it appeared space travel would give birth to a new era of world peace and international cooperation.

While the other scientists pat each other on the back and give thumbs up, the scientists from America and Iraq shake hands.

INT. ALBATROSS OFFICE

Conrad combs his hair while looking into a small mirror. He wears black-rimmed glasses. He glances sideways at the monitor and winces at the narration.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Then suddenly and unexpectedly on the return leg of Dick's landmark expedition, the 20 billion dollar spacecraft exploded.

DISCLAIMER ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(RUSHED)

This explosion is a reenactment.

The explosion on the screen reflects off of Conrad's glasses. Conrad glances at the framed picture on his desk and we now see that the picture is of himself and Llewellyn. Conrad is in a mission controller outfit and Llewellyn's in his Aerospace shirt.

CONRAD

(Angrily to himself)

We all know what happened.
We lived it.

Conrad exhales loudly, crosses his arms in disgust, and sits back in his chair looking somewhat dazed. He half-heartedly reaches for the shirt wrapped in plastic on his desk next to the monitor.

INT. SCIENTIST COUNCIL CHAMBER-DAY

The scientists are yelling at each other and pointing fingers.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
Following the tragedy, the scientists fought
about who was responsible for the technological
error that destroyed the ship.

The American delegate and the Iraqi delegate argue heatedly.

INT. MISSION CONTROL-DAY

TWO MEN in black-rimmed glasses sit at a large computer. The computer reads "The Problems of exploding Aeronauts" with a diagram sequence of an exploding ship. One of the techs drinks a bottle of "Good 4 U" soda. AN ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE in a three-piece suit grabs the soda from the computer tech. Several men in blue jumpsuits carry away boxes and boxes of merchandise in the background.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
Advertisers cancelled contracts.

The tech hangs his head in sadness.

INT. ALBATROSS

Conrad rips the plastic off of the shirt that he took from his desk and begins to unfold it. Conrad mouths the words to what the announcer says next in a mocking way.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
But luckily for Aerospace there was a hero.

Conrad is still messing with the shirt he just unwrapped.

CONRAD
Here comes everyone's favorite part.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE-DAY

JAMES STEPHENSON, a handsome man who looks like he could be a movie star stands behind a podium. Ed stands behind Stephenson.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

That hero was James Stephenson, the brave aeronaut who volunteered to pilot another mission, desperate to prove to the world that the exploration of Mars should continue.

INT. SCIENTIST COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

The scientists are smiling again. The Italian and Romanian scientists shake hands. The Chinese delegate wipes his brow in relief. The Iraqi offers the American his hand. The American hugs him instead.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

The scientists had been redeemed.
The public had been calmed. And most importantly, advertisers decided to continue their support of the Aerospace legacy.

INT. CONTROL ROOM-DAY

A "Good 4 U" soda bottle is put back in the computer tech's hand. Boxes and boxes are rolled back into the building.

INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE

Conrad looks at himself in a small mirror, self-consciously fussing with his hair.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

Stephenson successfully completed his mission and was commended for his bravery with a Nobel Peace Prize and an Addy award for Best Commercial from Outer-space, the first of its kind.

CONRAD

(TO HIMSELF)

I could stand to be a little more dashing...I

should've asked for highlights or a new nose or something.

INT. AEROSPACE MISSION CONTROL-NIGHT

The Aerospace mission control is a bustling hive of activity with several men in white shirts and black ties running around. A screen is at the front of the room. The screen shows the empty desk chair in the Albatross office.

Ed stands in the middle of the control room and wears a headset. He is sweating.

ED

Does he have everything he needs?
Is he going to be ready?

Everyone is running around not paying any attention to him.

ED

Is anybody even listening to me?

INT. ALBATROSS

Conrad puts the shirt on that he just unwrapped, but we don't see what's on it yet. He presses a button on the keyboard and ED appears on his monitor.

CONRAD

Ed, Ed do you copy?

On the monitor, Ed touches his headset.

ED

(ON SCREEN)

Copy you loud and clear, Conrad.

INT. AEROSPACE MISSION CONTROL-NIGHT

The image on the control room screen is now Conrad sitting at the desk.

CONRAD

(ON SCREEN)

Couple of questions boss?

ED

Shoot.

CONRAD

(ON SCREEN)

Why do we still have my best friends death sequence in the promo, even though I love seeing it every week, and what happens if this soda gives me indigestion?

ED

How many times do I have to tell you? That sequence holds the audience's attention. I don't like it any more than you, and about the soda, I'm sure you can handle it. I remember you drinking worse than that when you were down here watching over Stephenson from this Control room.

CONRAD

(ON SCREEN)

Yeah, but that stuff was supposed to hurt a little going down, plus I'm not a controller anymore, an Aeronauts gotta watch his health.

ED

Are you ready for the spot or not?

CONRAD

(ON SCREEN)

I'm sure all of my training in advertising and flying have prepared me to sell soda and not crash a ship. I'd say I'm ready.

Ed takes his hand off his headset.

ED

As big a jerk as always. He's ready.

INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE

Conrad rubs his eyes and shakes off his nerves. He stares at the webcam.

Conrad

God, I hate this.

EXT. ALBATROSS-SPACE

The Albatross is a beautiful ship. It is a mixture of spaceship, sailboat, and airplane. It sails through space. The bottom of the screen reads, "PREVIOUSLY RECORDED FOOTAGE".

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And now on his way to Mars, aboard the Spaceship Albatross is our third Aeronaut, Conrad! We go there live to him now! What will he have to say about his amazing journey to the red planet?

INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE

Conrad sits back revealing a "Good 4 U" logo on his shirt. He smiles a forced smile with raised eyebrows and lifts two "Good 4 U" soda bottles.

The "ON AIR" sign on the screen glows red.

FADE OUT.

Section II: Production Summary

TIMETABLE

The film will be shot over a three week period in October 2008 with production concluded at the end of the month. Post production will then begin and run through November 2008. The final cut of the film will be delivered no later than December 15, 2008.

CONTINGENCY PLAN

The following contingency plans have been established to ensure completion of the project:

EQUIPMENT- In the event that the F-900 HD camera malfunctions, the filmmakers have secured the Sony HDV camera to be checked out from the Teleplex.

LOCATIONS- In the event that the LIVING ROOM location falls through, the filmmakers have secured another location.

PROPS- In the event that the specific props are not made available, the filmmakers will make necessary arrangements to cover the expense of purchasing the appropriate props.

CREW- In the event that specific crew members are unable to perform their tasks, the filmmakers will make necessary arrangements to cover the positions.

SHOOTING SCHEDULE- In the event that a scheduled day of shooting is compromised, the filmmakers have scheduled re-shoot days to cover the lost times.

CAST- In the event that specific cast member are unable to perform their tasks, the filmmakers will make necessary changes to script to accommodate the alteration of cast.

THESIS FILM PRODUCTION CREW

Producer- Audrey Brown, Jake Williams

Writers- Audrey Brown, Jake Williams

Director- Jake Williams

Production Manager- Audrey Brown

Director of Photography- Shawn Weyerbacher

F-900 Camera Operator- Ben Reckelhoff

Model Design/ Builder- Caleb Williams

Production Designer- Justin Hensley

Set Designer- Joseph Martin, Jessie Rabideau, Jessica Devries

Production Sound Mixer- Ryan Carney

Boom Operator- Jerry Owens

Construction Coordinator- John Sadler

Key Grip- Jerry Owens

Gaffer- Jordan Riker

Production Assistants- Taylor Anspaugh, Paul Starr, Glenn Pratt

Post Production Graphics- Clark Knittle

Editor- Jeff Greer

Visual Effects Supervisor- Brian Boswell

Lead Composer-Kyle Peters

Visual Effects- Clark Knittle

Thesis Chairperson- Tim Pollard

THIRD TO MARS SHOOTING SCHEDULE

OCTOBER

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

			1 OFF	2 OFF	3 OFF	4 OFF
5 OFF	6 OFF	7 OFF	8 SHOOT DAY All day Day one Scenes: 3 EXT. MARS 4 INT. NEWSROOM	9 SHOOT DAY After 5 Scenes: 6,10,14 INT. SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER	10 SHOOT DAY After 2 p.m. Scenes: 2&3 11&15 INT. MISSION CONTROL	11 SHOOT DAY All day Day four Scenes: 17&19 INT. MISSION CONTROL 5,8,20 (B) INT. LIVING ROOM
12 OFF	13 SHOOT DAY All day RESHOTS from first week	14 OFF	15 SHOOT DAY All day RESHOTS from first week	16 OFF	17 OFF	18 OFF
19 FALL BREAK OFF	20 SHOOT DAY All day Scenes: 1,16,18,21 INT. ALBATROSS- OFFICE	21 OFF	22 SHOOT DAY All day Scenes: 7,9,12 INT. ALBATROSS- BEDROOM	23 OFF	24 OFF	25 OFF
26 OFF	27 SHOOT DAY All day Scene: 20 (A) EXT. ALBATROSS	28 OFF	29 SHOOT DAY All day RESHOTS From third week	30 OFF	31 OFF	

Third to Mars Props/Costumes

1. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE

- Computer monitor
- Web cam

- Small desk, preferably metal
 - Papers
 - Gadgets
 - Paperweights
 - Coffee mug
2. INT. PRESS CONFERENCE-DAY
- XL TEE-SHIRT with the stylized letter “A” on left breast
 - White buttoned dress shirt
 - Black tie
 - Podium
 - Aerospace international Seal
 - Cameras with flashbulbs (4 or 5)
3. EXT. MARS-SURFACE
- LLEWELLYN’S spacesuit
 - Flag with other flag colors on it
 - Flag pole
4. INT. NEWS ROOM-DAY
- Woman NEWSCASTER outfit
5. INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT
- MOTHER’S outfit
 - FATHER’S outfit
 - SON’S outfit
 - Son’s glasses
 - DAUGHTER’S outfit
 - HD-TV, large TV
 - Lamp
 - Living room trappings
6. INT. SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER-DAY
- 6 white lab coats
 - horseshoe table, 3 tables pushed into a U shape
 - black long table cloth
 - one Iraq 4x6 flag
 - one China 4x6 flag

- one India 4x6 flag
- one U.S.A. 4x6 flag
- one Romania 4x6 flag
- one Italy 4x6 flag

7. INT. ALBATROSS-BATHROOM

- Black rimmed glasses
- White tee-shirt
- Black comb
- Small, round handheld mirror

8. INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

(SAME AS 5)

- magazine

9. INT. ALBATROSS-HALLWAY

- black rimmed glasses
- white tee-shirt
- black comb

10. INT. SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER-DAY

(SAME AS 6)

11. INT. MISSION CONTROL-DAY

- 2 pair black rimmed glasses
- 2 white dress shirts
- 2 long black ties
- large computer monitor
- "Good 4 U" soda can/bottle
- AD REPRESENTATIVE'S outfit
- 4 blue coveralls

12. INT. ALBATROSS-BEDROOM

- vacuumed sealed t-shirt
- cot
- tall, metal dresser
- black glasses
- tee shirt

- "July 6th" label

13. INT. PRESS CONFERENCE-DAY

- STEPHENSON'S suit
- Podium (same from scene 2)
- Aerospace international seal on the front of the podium
- Easel
- Posterboard with flow charts, pie graphs, etc.

14. INT. SCIENTIST COUNCIL CHAMBER-DAY

- (SAME AS 6)

15. INT. CONTROL ROOM-DAY

- "Good 4 U" soda bottle
- black rimmed glasses
- white dress shirt
- black tie
- AD REP's suit
- Computer monitor

16. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE

(SAME AS 1)

- "Good 4 U" tee shirt
- black rimmed glasses
- handheld mirror

17. INT. AEROSPACE MISSION CONTROL-NIGHT

- 6 white shirts
- 6 black ties (unless a woman, then no tie)
- 6 black glasses
- Large projection screen
- Laptops at each station, or monitors at each station
- ED'S glasses, white shirt, black tie
- Headset

18. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE

- (SAME AS 6, 14)

19. INT. AEROSPACE MISSION CONTROL-NIGHT

- (SAME AS 17)

20. (A)EXT. ALBATROSS-SPACE

-MODEL EFFECTS SHOT

(B) INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

- (SAME AS 5, 8)

21. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE

(SAME AS 6,14,18)

-“Good 4 U” soda bottle

-“ON AIR” sign

THIRD TO MARS LOCATIONS

1. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE-**STUDIO D**
2. INT. PRESS CONFERENCE- **STUDIO D**
3. EXT. MARS-NIGHT- **STUDIO D**
4. INT. NEWS ROOM- **STUDIO D**

5. INT. LIVING ROOM- NIGHT- **PARENT'S HOUSE**
6. INT. SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER- **STUDIO D**
7. INT. ALBATROSS- BEDROOM- **STUDIO D**
8. INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT- **PARENT'S HOUSE**
9. INT. ALBATROSS-BEDROOM- **STUDIO D**
10. INT. SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER- **STUDIO D**
11. INT. MISSION CONTROL- **NEWSLINK**
12. INT. ALBATROSS-BEDROOM-**STUDIO D**
13. INT. PRESS CONFERENCE- **STUDIO D**
14. INT. SCIENTIST COUNCIL CHAMBER-**STUDIO D**
15. INT. CONTROL ROOM-**NEWSLINK**
16. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE-**STUDIO D**
17. INT. MISSION CONTROL- **NEWSLINK**
18. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE-**STUDIO D**
19. INT. MISSION CONTROL- **NEWSLINK**
20. (A.) EXT. ALBATROSS- **STUDIO D**
(B.) INT. LIVING ROOM- **PARENT'S HOUSE**
21. INT. ALBATROSS-OFFICE-**STUDIO D**

THIRD TO MARS CAST

Conrad

Llewellyn

Stephenson

Ed

Newscaster

Mother

Father

Son

Daughter

Iraqi Scientist

Romanian Scientist

American Scientist

Italian Scientist

Chinese Scientist

Indian Scientist

Paparazzi 1

Paparazzi 2

Paparazzi 3

Paparazzi 4

Controller One

Controller Two

Controller three

Controller four

Controller five

Controller six

Advertising Representative

Jumpsuit One

Jumpsuit Two

Jumpsuit Three

Jumpsuit Four

THIRD TO MARS- Casting Call Sheet

SCENE 1- ALBATROSS-OFFICE

Conrad

SCENE 2- PRESS CONFERENCE

Llewellyn

Ed

Paparazzi 1

Paparazzi 2

Paparazzi 3

Paparazzi 4

SCENE 3- Mars

Llewellyn

SCENE 4- NEWS ROOM

Woman Newscaster

SCENE 5- LIVING ROOM

Mother

Father

Son

Daughter

SCENE 6- SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER

Iraqi Scientist

Romanian Scientist

American Scientist

Italian Scientist

Chinese Scientist

Indian Scientist

SCENE 7- ALBATROSS-BATHROOM

Conrad

SCENE 8- LIVING ROOM

Mother

Father

Son

Daughter

SCENE 9- ALBATROSS-HALLWAY

Conrad

SCENE 10- SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER

Iraqi Scientist
Romanian Scientist
American Scientist
Italian Scientist
Chinese Scientist
Indian Scientist

SCENE 11- MISSION CONTROL

Controller One
Controller Two
Advertising Representative
Jumpsuit One
Jumpsuit Two
Jumpsuit Three
Jumpsuit Four

SCENE 12-ALBATROSS-BEDROOM

Conrad

SCENE 13- PRESS CONFERENCE

Ed
James Stephenson
Iraqi Scientist
Romanian Scientist
American Scientist
Italian Scientist
Chinese Scientist
Indian Scientist

SCENE 14- SCIENTISTS COUNCIL CHAMBER

Iraqi Scientist
Romanian Scientist
American Scientist
Italian Scientist
Chinese Scientist
Indian Scientist

SCENE 15- CONTROL ROOM

Controller One
Controller Two
Advertising Representative
Jumpsuit One
Jumpsuit Two
Jumpsuit Three
Jumpsuit Four

SCENE 16- ALBATROSS-OFFICE

Conrad

SCENE 17- MISSION CONTROL

Ed
Controller one
Controller two
Controller three
Controller four
Controller five
Controller six

SCENE 18- ALBATROSS OFFICE

Conrad

SCENE 19- MISSION CONTROL

Ed
Controller one
Controller two
Controller three
Controller four
Controller five
Controller six

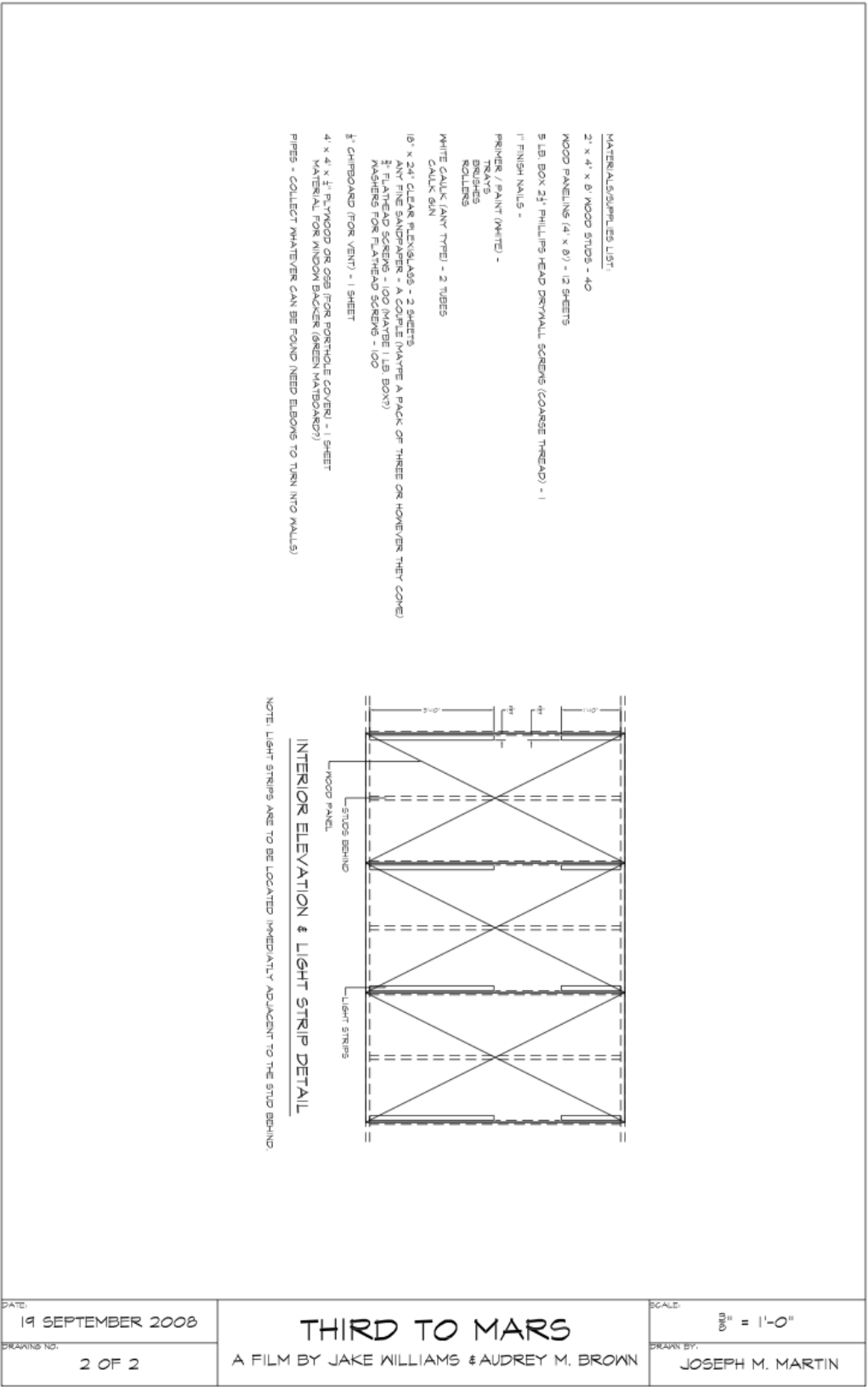
SCENE 20 (A)- EXT. ALBATROSS-SPACE (MODEL EFFECT SHOT)

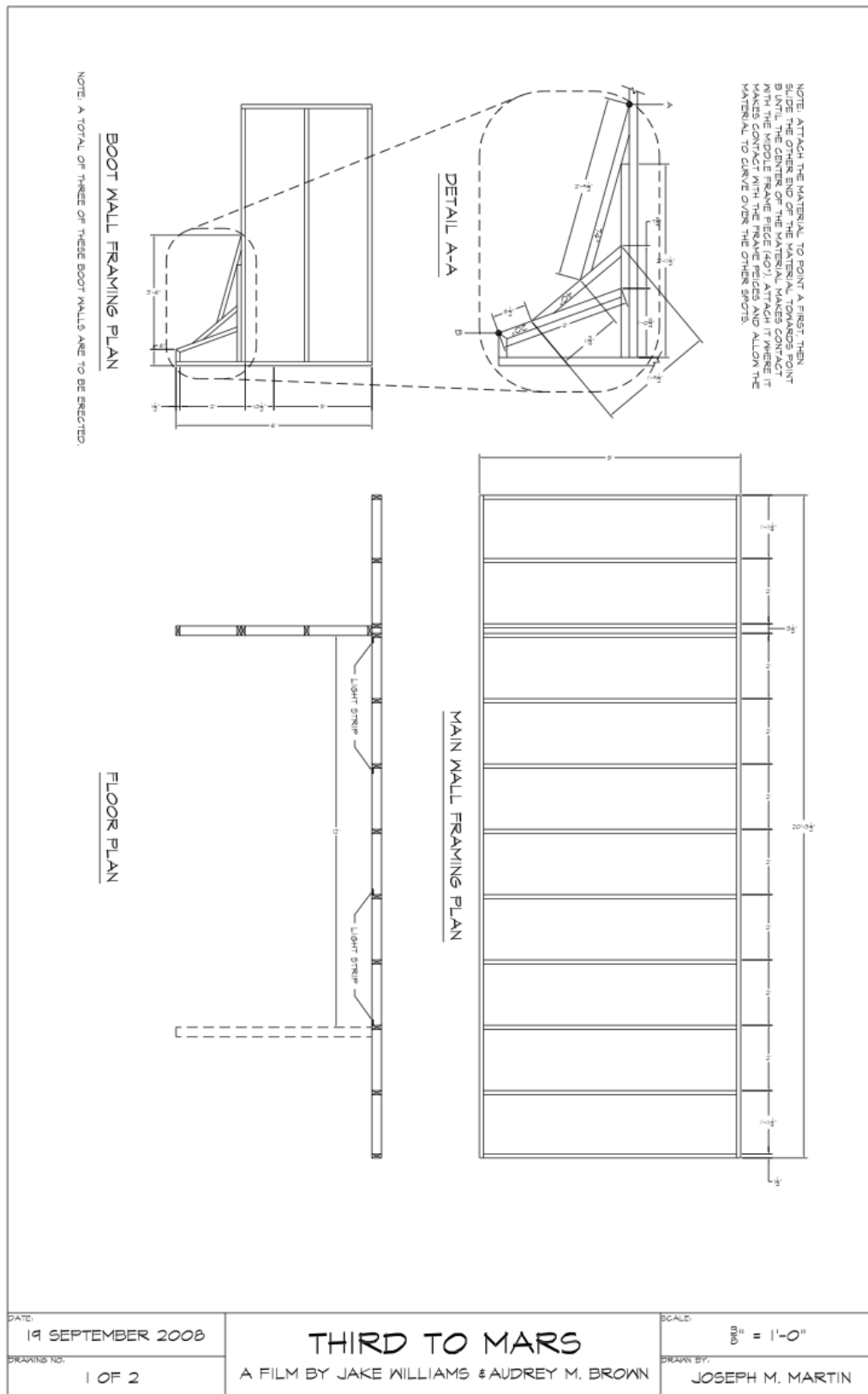
(B) INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT




Father
Mother
Son
Daughter

SCENE 21- ALBATROSS-OFFICE

Conrad





	Page: 1
<div>SHOT: 1</div> <div>CAMERA: SLOW PUSH IN UNTIL MONITOR SCREEN FILLS THE FRAME</div> <div></div>	<div>SCENE: 1</div>
<div>SHOT: _____</div> <div></div>	<div>ANNOUCER (V.O.) " And now the history of areospace"</div>
<div></div>	<div>(V.O.) " Following the colonization of the moon Areospace International looked for a bigger, grander operation.</div>
	<div>(V.O.) " MARS ! "</div>

Page: 2

SCENE: 2



SHOT: 2

(V.O.) "Lewellyn Dicks was selected..."



SHOT: 3

...to be the first man to make the journey and was given...



SHOT: 4

... a heroes send off.



SHOT: 5

CAMERA: WS THEN ZOOM TO A CU IN AND FOCUS GIVING AN AUTOFOCUS EFFECT

SCENE: 3



SHOT: 6

SCENE: 4

LEWELLYN'S CU BECOMES THE OTS

(V.O.) "Due to the unprecedented trip to Mars, television viewership was at its all time high the world over..."

Page: 3

SCENE: 5



SHOT: 7

(V.O.) " ...Advertisers scrambled to take advantage of this new captive audience.



SHOT: 8

FATHER: " I've never seen so many-commercials in my life.

MOTHER: "Oh honey that reminds me, on your way home from work tomorrow can you pick up a gallon of "GOOD 4 U" soda...



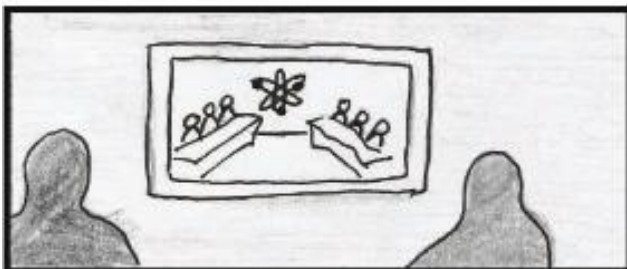
SHOT: 9

... I want t make sure the kids have enough for their lunches



SHOT: 10

KIDS: (In unison) "YAY !"



SHOT: 11

(V.O.): The worlds top scientists hired by Aerospace....

Page: 4

SCENE: 6



SHOT: 12

HIGH ANGLE WS

(V.O.): " ...to build a ship capable of reaching Mars...



SHOT: 13

...rejoiced in the success of the mission.



SHOT: 14

...And it appeared space travel would give birth to a new era of...



SHOT: 15

...world peace and international cooperation.

Page: 5

SCENE: 7



SHOT: 16

T.V IS HEARD IN THE BACK-
ROUND



SHOT: 17

(V.O.): "Then suddenly and..."



SHOT: 18

SCENE: 8

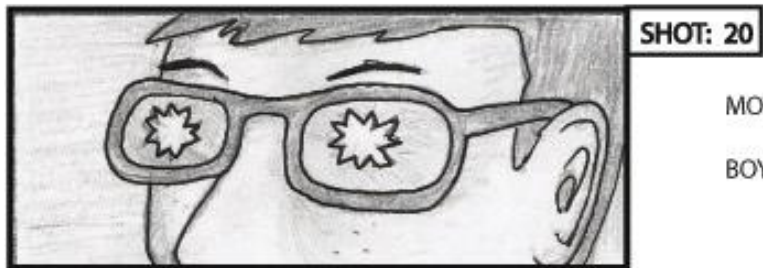
...unexpectedly on the return leg of Dick's
landmark expedition the 20 billion dollar
spacecraft...



SHOT: 19

...EXPLODED.

DICLAIMER VOICE: "This explosion is a
reenactment."



SHOT: 20

MOTHER: "They show that part an awful lot.

BOY: "wow..."

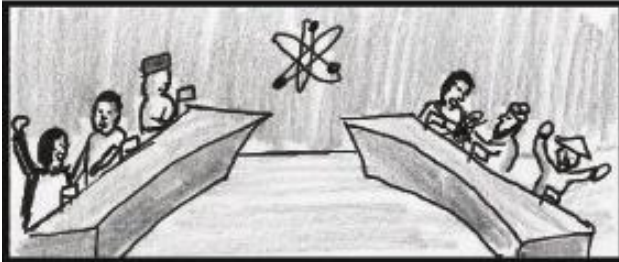
Page: 6

SCENE: 9



SHOT: 21

CONRAD: "Why don't they cut that part out"



SHOT: 22

SCENE: 10

(V.O.): "Following the tragedy, the scientist fought..."



SHOT: 23

...over who was responsible for...



SHOT: 24

...the technological error.



SHOT: 25

SCENE: 11

(V.O.): "Advertisers cancelled contracts."

MEN COME IN AND REMOVE THE "GOOD 4 U" SODA FROM THE CREW

Page: 7



SHOT: 26

SCENE: 12

(V.O.): " But luckily for Aerospace there was a hero....

CONRAD PULLS A VACCUM SEALED SHIRT FROM A DRAWER, THEN WALKS AWAY INTO ANOTHER ROOM



SHOT: 27

SCENE: 13

...The hero, James Stephenson, bravely voluteered to pilot another mission desperate to prove to the world that Aerospace's exploration of Mars should continue...



SHOT: 28

...the scientists had been redeemed...



SHOT: 29

SCENE: 14

the public had been calmed....



SHOT: 30

Page: 8

SCENE: 15



SHOT: 31

(V.O.): " And advertisers decided to continue their support of the Aerospace legacy...



SHOT: 32

CAMERA: PULL BACK SLOWLY TO REVEAL CONRAD ENTERING THE ROOM AND WATCHING THE TV SCREEN

...Stephenson successfully completed his mission and was comended for his bravery with a Nobel Peace Prize...



...and and Addy award for Best Commercial from Outer-Space, the first of its kind.

CONRAD: (to himself) "I could be a little more dashing...



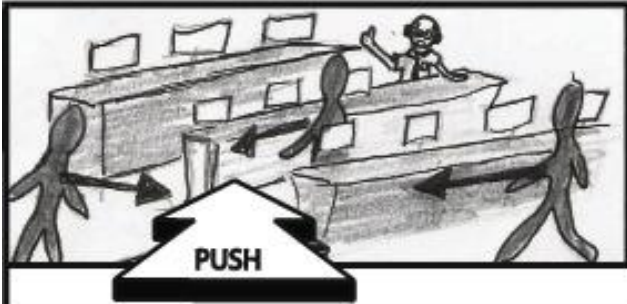
SHOT: 33

....Blond highlights?

Page: 9

SCENE: 17

SHOT: 34



CAMERA: PUSH IN SLOWLY FROM WS TO A MED CU OF ED.

ED: "Does he have everything he needs?..."



...Is he going to be ready?...



...Is anybody even listening to me?"



SHOT: 35

SCENE: 18

CONRAD: "Ed,...Ed do you copy?"

ED: "Copy you loud..."



SHOT: 36

...and clear."

Page: 10



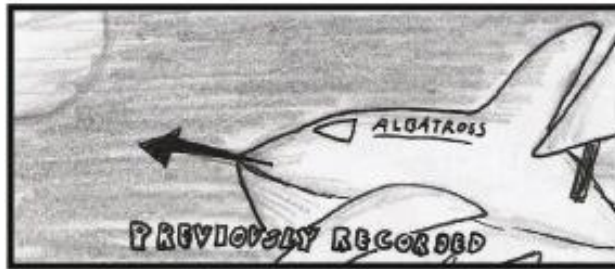
SHOT: 37

SCENE: 19

ED AND CONRAD CONVERSE

CONRAD: " Couple of questions
boss?"

.....ED: " As big a jerk as
always. He's ready."



SHOT: 38

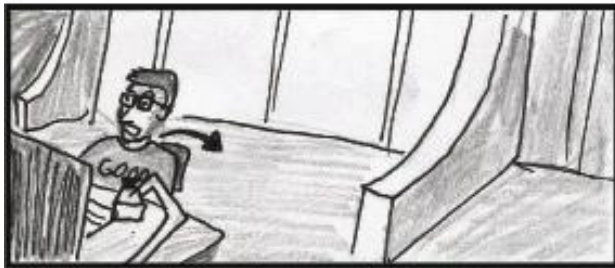
SCENE: 20

(V.O.): " And now on his way to Mars,
aboard the spaceship Albatross is our third
Aeronaut...



SHOT: 39

....Conrad! We go there live to him now!



SHOT: 40

SCENE: 21

CONRAD: " God, I hate this."

CONRAD LEANS BACK REVEALING THE "
GOOD 4 U" SODA T-SHIRT.



SHOT: 41

:FADE TO BLACK